

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 028520

E.O. 11652: N.A.

TAGS: BEXP, AS, NZ

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CLOSING OF SYDNEY TRADE CENTER

1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FY 77 BUDGET PRESENTATION PROVIDES FOR CLOSING OF TWO TRADE CENTERS SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH STATEON WHICH TWO SHOULD BE CHOSEN. IN HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE HEARINGS THIS WEEK, COMMERCE WILL TESTIFY THAT IT BELIEVES SYDNEY TRADE CENTER SHOULD BE ONE OF THE TWO TO BE CLOSED. WE HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH COMMERCE OFFICIALS AND PLAN FURTHER DISCUSSIONS NEXT WEEK.

2. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE YOUR VIEWS REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CENTER AS A MEANS OF FACILITATING AND IMPROVING OUR TRADE RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA AND THE LIKELY CONSEQUENCES, BOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL, RESULTING FROM ITS CLOSURE.

3. COMMERCE'S INTENTION IS TO ACHIEVE CLOSING OF THE TRADE CENTERS BY DECEMBER 31, 1976 SO THAT SAVINGS CAN BE USED FOR OTHER PURPOSES DURING FY 77. YOUR BEST ESTIMATES OF THE
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SAVINGS LIKELY TO BE REALIZED BY SUCH A PRECIPITOUS CLOSING

WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

4. AS A MATTER OF GENERAL POLICY, THE DEPARTMENT STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE TRADE CENTER CONCEPT. WE BELIEVE THAT THE SYDNEY TRADE CENTER HAS SERVED A USEFUL PURPOSE IN PROMOTING TRADE WITH AUSTRALIA, AND WE INTEND TO EMPHASIZE THIS POINT IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH COMMERCE BASED ON THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN YOUR REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE. KISSINGER

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